

# WASHINGTON CROP WEATHER

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## Crop and Weather Information for the Month of January 2001

### WESTERN

**Grays Harbor:** Below average rainfall and above average temperatures during the month had most agricultural producers wondering if there will be an early spring. Livestock producers purchased less hay due to mild temperatures and early pasture growth. Christmas tree growers started replanting harvested fields. Commercial daffodil and tulip growers reported earlier than normal bulb emergence. Ornamental plant nurseries were pleased with what appears to be a winter with no cold injury to plants.

**Pierce/Thurston:** January was dryer than normal for the South Puget Sound area. Farmers were able to get into their fields without much trouble. The weather had little effect on crops. There was very little agricultural activity going on.

**Thurston:** Despite dire forecasts for frequent floods and heavy snow accumulations, the month of January continued this winter's pattern of below average rainfall and above average temperatures. That had a positive impact on most agricultural producers in the county. Christmas tree growers started planting a month earlier than normal. Pastures have started growing earlier than normal, and retail nurseries reported a brisk business selling early blooming

primroses. On the negative side, hay producers were disappointed with slow sales. There were reports of wells going dry in south Thurston County. Most of the wells were residential and non-farm use.

**Skamania:** The precipitation received was below normal for the month of January. Buds were swelling on fruit trees.

**Snohomish/Clallum:** The weather for January was dryer and warmer most days than average. The temperature dropped below freezing for several days mid-month. No flooding has occurred because of the below average precipitation. No crop damage or livestock loss reports were submitted, due to any weather conditions, during the month of January.

**Snohomish (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Pastures were in poor condition. Local dairies were going out of business. Soil moisture was low for this time of the year. Fruit tree pruning and raspberry caning was underway.

### CENTRAL

**Benton:** Producers were very concerned about the lack of snow in the mountains. Some areas reported as much as a 65 percent drop from normal, in the snowpack. This could have disastrous consequences for the irrigators in the lower Yakima Valley.

**Benton (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Pruning continued in a relatively open winter. Soil moisture was marginal with little snow cover.

**Chelan/Douglas:** The soil moisture was 70% very short, 20% short, and 10% adequate. The crops had snow cover. Fruit trees had a high volume of buds, with no frost damage. Cold weather and snow continued at normal rates. Both counties were concerned about the lack of moisture content in area snowpack. Spring moisture could be far below normal and may cause drought conditions.

**Franklin:** January was a relatively normal month, with precipitation and temperatures normal for crops. The colder winter has been good for perennials in dormancy and should help in the reduction of pests in the coming year. Livestock range conditions appeared fair to normal. Snow cover in the north end of the county, provided dryland wheat a little more protection, but northern areas have also experienced more gulying due to spotty heavier rain during the month, making fieldwork more difficult. There were limited reports of small washout in some dryland fields.

**Yakima:** The temperatures during January were approximately 2 degrees above normal, and the precipitation was approximately .7 of an inch below normal. No crop damage due to weather conditions were reported.

### EASTERN

**Adams:** Moisture was short throughout the county. Winter wheat was in fair condition.

**Asotin/Garfield:** Good snow cover in both counties protected winter wheat for most of the month. Overall moisture was below average in certain areas. Snowpack in the mountains was below normal, which could effect water supplies this spring and summer.

**Lincoln:** The county was blanketed with snow cover providing protection for fall seeded wheat. There were concerns of snow mold in the northern part of the county, due to the length of snow cover—since the first of November. Soil moisture was short and additional precipitation was needed. Ground frost was at a minimal and was about 3-5 inches.

**Lincoln (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Moisture was short throughout the county. Winter wheat was in fair condition.

**Stevens:** Most of the county was blanketed by 12-18 inches of snow during the month. The ground under the snow was frost free.

**Walla Walla:** Weather conditions were good for January. Moisture levels were low and there was a lack of snowpack in the mountains, however; most were optimistic about conditions for spring.

**Whitman:** Winter hay supplies continued to be very adequate to meet feeding requirements locally and livestock were in good condition. Snow cover was generally adequate on much of the winter wheat crop. Although temperatures were cold, extremely cold temperatures have not yet occurred. Early reports on calving and lambing were positive, although February and March will bring most of the activity.



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